

# Post-rock is, like, so pomo

## Do Make Say Think

With Westfalia  
Friday, 2 March at 8pm  
Starlite Room

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Ohad Benchetrit isn't a fan of the term "post-rock"—but unfortunately it's one that also happens to be what his Toronto-based band, Do Make Say Think, has so often been associated with since its inception in 1995.

Blurily defined as using rock instrumentation for non-rock purposes, the post-rock umbrella hangs over bands like Mogwai, Explosions In The Sky and Godspeed You! Black Emperor. The label, nevertheless, is considered a throwaway by both critics and musicians alike.

"It's kind of annoying to have people say that [post-rock] is the kind of music you are," vents Benchetrit. "We never agreed to that when we started a band. I mean, we never heard of the term post-rock before. Just because you created it doesn't mean we're now obligated to be

everything you think post-rock is supposed to be."

For DMST's recent fifth album *You, You're a History in a Rust*, the band went beyond the rules of their usual instrumental music and decided to add some lyrics. While the human voice had previously been used in their other albums, the use of words is novel.

Benchetrit admits that the band remains concerned about using lyrics that will take away listeners' ability to interpret their music.

"We hinted at it very lightly on the record ... and that's why we wouldn't overly use [lyrics]," Benchetrit says. "I would say 95 per cent of the record is still instrumental. But you don't want every moment in the record to be the same so if we have one or two moments where we've interpreted certain things on purpose. I still think that's fine."

Even more unique about DMST's latest release is its country twang, thanks to the addition of banjos and acoustic guitars. In the past, such instruments were only displayed for minute moments. This time around, they have been pushed centre stage.

Having been in the music scene now for a decade, DMST have had time to reflect on how their past performance ideas might have lost that special touch. However, the group has maintained their artistic goals, thus explaining how *You, You're a History in a Rust* came to be title of the new album.

"The rust part came from the idea that some things are old and have lost their initial value," Benchetrit explains. "If you look at a rusted piano and bike, they don't have their initial value anymore. You can't ride that bike, you can't play that piano. But somehow, in a way, they're still very beautiful. And now, they're almost art."

Over the years, Benchetrit has seen a rise in the popularity of many post-rock bands such as Sigur Rós and Godspeed. However, he believes that you can't control whether or not a band achieves success, and understands that instrumental music isn't for everyone.

"There's music that you would never listen to by yourself, like a certain kind of dance music," says Benchetrit. "But when you're out with your friends on a Saturday night, all of a sudden you



understand why people like house music. That's its time, that's its place. There are lots of people out there who don't like jazz or classical at all but they're still completely valid styles. You

can try your hardest to sit down and explain why John Coltrane is a master, but at the end of the day, if they don't like jazz, there's nothing you can do about it."

# Where have all the good, mid-sized venues gone?



PAUL  
BLINOV

I had the distinct pleasure of seeing Metric at the Dinwoodie last September. This was pre-*Live It Out*, and the band had yet to attain the huge following that would emerge after the release of that album. The place was packed anyways, mind you, and as you probably already know if you've seen

them live, Metric is a force to be reckoned with. New and old songs alike were greeted with roars, and one guy kept shouting, "How do you rock so hard?!" I left that show with my ears ringing and my mind blown. It was easily one the best shows I've seen: in your face, sweaty and mesmerizing.

Jump forward several months, one gold album and three other shows in Edmonton, and I went to see Metric again. This time, however, their fan base had swollen exponentially—thanks to constant MuchMusic rotation—and the band was now playing the Shaw Conference Centre.

The Shaw is colossal when compared

to the University of Alberta's Dinwoodie Lounge, and the magic present in Metric's previous show didn't hold up in the yawning size of the place. To me, it was a disappointment, but not due to Metric's performance at all. They played with just as much energy as they had in September, but it was just too big of a place for that band to command.

What we need is a new mid-sized venue in Edmonton. Look at what we have. The venue formerly known as Red's? It's the right size, but the acoustics are mangled at best and there's also that obtrusive pillar. You know the one. The Sidetrack Café just closed, so the best thing we have of a medium size

at the moment is the Starlite room, which, coupled with Victory Lounge downstairs, carries its share of shows. But that's a handful of venues for a truckload of touring acts.

It's simple: the closer you are to your favourite band, the more energy they can take from you and, chances are, the better show they'll put on. But the problem persists: what do you do if your favourite band should (God forbid) be popular enough to warrant a decent-sized venue? Here in Edmonton, concert options are limited by what the band does. If they book a small or medium venue like the Starlite, you'll have to kill a guy for a ticket. If they're

performing a larger spot, like the Shaw, you get to see them in a static atmosphere. To recap: lame and more lame. Having two back-to-back gigs in the same place is also an option, but spending the night in the same city is rare and slows down a band's tour.

Edmonton's finally bringing in a healthy number of bands, but a new, mid-sized venue would attract even more acts and let you see them in a venue that complements their sound. It's not much to ask; something that bridges the gap between the Starlite and the Shaw, to give musical acts stuck in the middle a fair shot at winning an audience. Please?

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